

Bulletin of Anomalous Experience

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For information on subscriptions, contributions to BAE, and copyright policy, see page 8

Editorial

Results of Reader Survey

Here are the results of last issue's mail-in survey.

1. BAE size and frequency:
I included this question to explore a concern expressed by David Ritchey a few issues back that issues were getting too big to comfortably read. Here are the results:

	# Pages per issue				
# issues per year	12	16	20	24	28
12 issues/year	3	2	2	4	2
6 issues/year		1	6	11	2
4 issues/year	1				1

(Some respondents indicated more than one choice).

Thirty-one percent of the responses (11 votes) are in favour of the current size/frequency (24 pages, 6 times a year). 40% (14 votes) prefer smaller issues produced as frequently or more often. A minority, 23% (8 votes), want more BAE (i.e. the same or larger size produced as often or more frequently). Some readers commented that they were more concerned with the overall quality of the publication (judged as useful information presented in a succinct and timely fashion) than with number of pages per issue or issues per year.

The latter view has been, and will continue to be, my approach. To that end, I will continue to exercise my editorial prerogative as to the size of each issue. Frankly, I also have to acknowledge some financial pressure: BAE's subscription revenues do not cover its production costs, so issues of 20 pages are going to be the norm for the next few issues, with issues of 24 or 28 pages appearing as contributions or newsworthy developments dictate.

2. Electronic format

I asked, "If an electronic version of BAE were made available (either on a bulletin board system or through an Internet service such as e-mail or Listserv), would you use it...

	Yes	No
Use it?	7	23
If so, would you prefer it to a hard-copy version?	*2*	*5*

That's pretty self-explanatory.

3. Subject areas

I asked, "I am contemplating expanding the mandate of BAE from its primary focus on the UFO abduction experience to more formally cover the broader range of non-ordinary or 'anomalous' experiences, such as paranormal or psychic, shamanic, psychedelic/empathogenic, out-of-body, and near-death experiences. The format would stay the same, including the emphasis on reader participation and reviews of relevant scientific and medical literature."

	Yes	No
If this change were made, would you still subscribe to BAE?	30	3

Numbers aside, there were some compelling arguments both for and against this idea. From the pro side:

R.J. Durant: One of the biggest problems/ deficits in UFO-abduction research is lack of context. There is a "bigger picture" and it needs serious inquiry by serious people: BAE.

David Ritchey: I would be even more delighted if you would expand your scope. As far as I am concerned, one cannot look at one type of anomalous experience without looking at them all. I am convinced that most, if not all of them are simply different manifestations (or facets) of the same thing.

Mark Moravec: Yes, as long as "UFO experiences" (not necessarily only abductions) were still regularly considered within the broader range of content.

The three who voted against broadening the focus argued that BAE has created a unique niche for itself, and that shifting the focus from abductions to everything anomalous "will make BAE a 'Journal of Everything' and nobody will know what business we're in." Continue to cover psychic phenomena and other paranormal experiences, they recommend, as long as the focus is still on abductions. (In fact this is what BAE has been doing for the last few years)

Readers do feel there is room for a BAE-style newsletter that covers the broad range of the paranormal in the same style as we have been covering abductions. I agree. However, I also agree that if BAE widens its focus then it will no longer serves the abduction field, and I don't think the debate in that area is anywhere near concluded. While the idea of launching a second newsletter has some appeal, I doubt it would have enough of a market to be self-supporting.

So, your editor votes with the minority. BAE will continue to cover the broad range of paranormal experiences as they relate to the abduction experience (however, the way I interpret it, this is a broad enough mandate to cover all the areas listed in the survey question).

Networking directory
This will appear in the next issue. All readers are welcome to participate. If you have not yet sent in your information, please do so as soon as possible:

- Name, address, telephone number (if you wish)
- Fax number
- E-mail address
- Brief bio
- Areas of networking interests

Shameless Self-Congratulation Section

The following review of BAE appeared in Topher Cooper's column "Anomalous Propagation" in Journal of Scientific Exploration 8(2), pp. 169-73, Summer 1994:

My only complaint about the truly outstanding *Bulletin of Anomalous Experience* is its overly broad title. Little else could be improved on. It is directed at mental health professionals and academics who are interested in "the UFO 'abduction' experience and related issues" but is must reading for *anyone* interested in this area. It does not attempt to stick narrowly to its primary topic but feels free to explore in depth related issues like possible confabulation in claimed cases of ritual abuse. Each bimonthly issue of approximately 30 pages includes articles, surveys of relevant literature, book reviews and an "Experiencers' Section" where "experiencers" get to tell their own story in their own words. Most importantly there is an energetic and stimulating letter's section where readers actively debate each other. BAE truly is not restricted to a single viewpoint (though David Gotlib is quite open about his opinions on various issues), and a full range of opinions gets full coverage. This is highly recommended.

BAE also received a networking listing in an Italian journal of anomalies called L'Eta' Dell'Acquario. In Italian BAE is "Il bollettino delle Esperienze Anomale." Just so you know.

Mail

Response to Reviews of John Mack's Abduction

I have a few comments concerning your and Stuart Appelle's reviews of John Mack's Abduction. First, let me say that I find your criticisms of Dr. Mack's work to be careful and quite fair; and I think the role you, Dr. Appelle, and other colleagues are playing in the examination of the abduction phenomenon is extremely valuable.

As a psychological and technical professional (I am a cross-cultural psychologist working in the area of U.S.-Japan technology exchange and as an educational software developer), I concur with your position on a number of points: I too wish that Dr. Mack had done a better job of arguing the scientific issues the phenomenon raises, and I wish he had hewn more closely to the basic tenets of scientific methodology in working with clients and reporting that work.

But I am also an "experiencer." And a lifetime of firsthand experience of apparent "alien" contact, the conscious memories of which go back to early childhood, has led me to conclude that I am faced with a phenomenon that is of considerable importance to me and to all of us. (You may have concluded something similar, since you have been actively involved in this area for at least five years now.)

Certainly, my own memories, and the affective power tied up in them, are no more reliable as scientific data than those of anyone else; and science has little use for them. But that does nothing to lessen their significance to me; nor does it alter my conviction that, while I cannot be absolutely sure that my perceptions, subsequent interpretation, and present memories of what happened are 100 percent complete or correct, it is overwhelmingly likely that they are *very* correct.

That's how we make our way in this world, isn't it: we tread on epistemological quicksand, but we somehow get over. Those of us who have scientific training do apply it to everyday life, but most of us employ other methods and tools as well. For example, when a friend tells us of an improbable experience, we may well base our judgment of its veridicality on the force of emotion (as well as reason) with which it is conveyed, and we may also ask how close and trustworthy a friend this is. If the story is very remarkable, we may weight our judgment more heavily on the second factor and still find ourselves willing and able to believe a very trusted friend. If the story borders on the outlandish, however — and abduction by aliens would fall into this category for most of us — we may simply not be able to buy it (until it becomes obvious that the same thing is happening to many good friends, who tell us their experiences directly and convincingly).

There is one more factor, though, that might incline us (personally, now, not scientifically) to accept a report of alien abduction as true; and that is our own experience. Now we must ask questions of ourselves: how strong and real was my experience? How good is my memory of it? How much does it actually resemble the experience my friend is relating? (We may be inclined to alter our own experience on the spot, in order to sympathize with our friend.) If these questions are answered honestly and successfully, we may feel we have quite good grounds for accepting the friend's experience; and we may find our own improbable experience somewhat confirmed, particularly if unlikely details in the experiences are strikingly similar.

The situation I find myself in with regard to Dr. Mack and his book is that I don't really know the man — I've merely read him and seen him on TV. Nor am I good friends with any of the clients whose experiences he describes and analyzes. The overall tenor as well as important details of those experiences, as reported, are in some cases (not all) very similar to my own; yet I am far from being able to fully accept any of them.

Nevertheless, I strongly suspect that Dr. Mack has been exposed, if not firsthand then at a very close secondhand, to powerful, indeed soul-shaking experiences of apparent "alien" contact, to the extent that he has been personally convinced of their authenticity; and it is my impression that he is responding to this body of experience as fully and honestly as he knows how. I may fault him as a scientist but, provisionally at least, I don't much fault him as a human being; and it could just be that the book he has written will turn out to be far more valuable than the book most of us hoped and expected he would write.

Charles Sweet, Ph.D.

Re: Your review of Abductions. Right on! Mack could have done a great deal to improve the credibility of the UFO abduction field, since he already had credentials (Ph.D., Harvard, APS, etc.) enough for people to take him seriously... but I think he ends up doing it a disservice by suggesting that the role of a therapist is to help his patient "co-create" reality. The fact that Mack peddles such softheaded nonsense in Abductions is only going to undo his credibility, and further reinforce the skeptics' position that only dunderheads could be interested in so bizarre a topic as UFO abductions. I think his preconceived notions that this is a positive spiritual experience, requiring reinforcement rather than therapy, is downright dangerous.

It's really too bad, because in two cases (him, and Jacobs), it is clear that the people with the most notable degrees are not providing the best theoretical insights with regard to abductions... quite a shame, really.

Steve Mizrach

I just received the latest BAE and I would like to offer a few comments.

For me, the two reviews of Mack's book were interesting to read, especially since Mack is widely perceived as some kind of "guru" for those wishing to affirm their belief in aliens as abductors. Having abductee therapists (sorry about the term) pan Mack's book and criticize his work was very fascinating and a much-needed alternative viewpoint. We know that Mack's conclusions are ridiculed by CSICOP and the debunkers, but when thoughtful criticism is displayed by people actually studying the phenomenon, then it's time to take notice.

(This is my feeling regarding Persinger's work, but more on that later.) *[Ed: See letter later in this section]*

I think that what is most important about the critical analyses of Mack's abductee studies is that it points out that scholarship is not necessarily enough to make oneself an expert or an authority. Much has been made of Mack's Harvard tenure, his M.D., his Pulitzer Prize and his many years in psychiatry. The implication has been that a scientist of his stature must be "onto something," and must be "right."

Debunkers have already attacked on this point by implying that the study of UFOs is far removed from normal clinical practice, and that Mack should have known better. Unfortunately, the kettle has been called black too many times. Debunkers such as Carl Sagan or Paul Kurtz, without themselves having sufficient background to make such pronouncements, have publicly proclaimed the impossibility of alien visitation and astrology without doing any personal studies of the data. This is not to say that I disagree with them; it merely shows that scientists are subject to biases and quick judgement just like anyone else.

The problem is that Mack has presented us with some interesting cases that, regardless of their "reality," deserve some scientific attention. If there is no physical phenomenon occurring, then there is at least a psychological and/or sociological one that is manifesting within our society. It is not sufficient (as was done at the CSICOP meeting in Seattle) to generalize and say that abductees are seeking attention as a consequence of personal problems. We should be asking why, precisely, are people fantasizing complex relationships with aliens, rape, adventist warnings from higher beings and other traumatic imagery. Exactly how prevalent is this "condition" that might be termed TAS (Traumatic Abduction Syndrome)? How many are affected? Potentially affected?

Chris Rutkowski

From the onset, it should have been clear that John Mack was unable to deliver what people, especially UFO enthusiasts, expected of him. I'm sure Mack realised that when writing this book, he would leave some section of the public wanting. It therefore seems not illogical that he chose to do what he felt best: simply write about the people that contacted him and inform the public of what they went through.

The point I want to tackle though is this: okay, Mack might not have lived up to his "aura" of being a big-wig scientist/ professor who meticously researched the UFO abduction-phenomenon. "All" he seems to have done is what other people like Hopkins, Fowler, etc. did: write down accounts of what abductees told him. I believe that is actually the most sensitive thing Mack could have done (on a practical level).

Mack might not be the big analyst we were all waiting for, but we shouldn't put aside this book and say: oh dear, what a pitty it wasn't what I expected it to be. On the contrary: here we have 13 people who state things that are quite if not totally amazing: abductees as a mix of alien-human breeding/incarnation is something that was not widely reported elsewhere. In fact, most of what Mack reported hasn't been reported elsewhere. The same goes for Karla Turner, who in her latest book Taken stated how she knew of several researchers who had "cheated" on the issue of reporting human (possibly military) involvement with the abductees (if not abductions). Mack (like Turner) is willing to list all material the abductees tell him, not matter how amazing or unbelievable it seems. He doesn't judge them, simply reports.

Quite a number of researchers have "limited" the UFO abduction-phenomenon to simply saying ETs were visiting us and were interbreeding with us. Mack has quite literally shattered that assumption and has listed accounts (evidence) that show the UFO abduction-phenomenon is much more than that. As such, he has introduced new evidence into this field.

And this leads me to the central issue of this controversy: it seems we were all expecting proof of some kind. Proof that hypnosis was alright to work with (or not alright) in

abduction-cases, proof how these people were (or weren't) unstable,... But how can we start thinking about proof (something quite possibly impossible because of the very nature of this phenomenon) when we haven't gathered all the evidence. That we haven't gathered it is amply shown in Abduction *and* Taken, to name but these two recent books. So before we can ask of Mack or anyone else to discuss in depth and great detail aspects of this phenomenon, we should first collect all (or as good as) material (evidence, accounts). The accounts unearthed by Mack show that the evidence gathering, starting with Hopkins and followed by several others, is still going on and is continued by Mack. Mack, I feel, has taking UFO abduction research into another realm (quite litteraly). Let's hope his open-mindedness about this phenomenon is an inspiration to all of us to report EVERYTHING. When we have, then Mack finally can live up to his (if not our) reputation and discuss this phenomenon as a "professor of psychiatry at Harvard". But let's stop bashing the man for trying to do some good.

Filip Coppens

I would like to comment on Stuart Appelle's review, 'Additional Thoughts on Abduction' that appeared in BAE 5(3). First, contrary to Professor Appelle's conviction, science may very well enjoy ". . . its preeminence as a source of knowledge . . . because of socio-political dynamics" (p. 11). Whether or not scientific knowledge is superior to all other forms of knowledge is certainly debatable (Feyerabend, 1975, 1991). Second, Stuart Appelle does not seem to understand John Mack when he says that: "It is to a large degree, the scientific and governmental elite and the selected media that it controls that determine what we are to believe is real..." (quoted in Appelle, 1994, p. 11). Perhaps Professor Appelle would find understanding in Chomsky (1989a, 1989b, 1990), Chomsky and Herman (1988), or maybe in Parenti (1993). 'To be', in this culture at least, seems to mean being politicized, ideologized, and socialized (cf. Prilleltensky, 1989; Sheldrake, 1989, p. 271). It is in this 'ontological political arena' that all anomalous phenomena (not just "UFO abduction phenomena") must be confronted. It is my belief, that in order to fully understand these events we will have to move towards becoming depoliticized, deideologized, and desocialized.

R.E. Sawchuck

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Science, Experience, and the Abduction Phenomenon

a response to the preceding comments

by Stuart Appelle, Ph.D.

I am pleased that my review of Abduction elicited a range of opinions regarding the relevance of science and experience to understanding the abduction phenomenon. Although my review addressed these issues primarily by describing Mack's and the media's perspectives on this, in light of the respondents' comments I feel an obligation to provide a commentary of my own.

Before specifically addressing the issues raised by the respondents, let me be very clear about a fundamental point. A debate about the role of science and experience in regard to understanding the abduction phenomenon has as much to do with one's premises about the abduction experiences' causality — and one's motivation to demonstrate causality to others — than anything about the nature of science and experience themselves. The strength of the scientific method lies in its ability to distinguish among competing hypotheses by providing demonstrations which bear on the validity of those hypotheses. Those whose interests and motivations are consistent with these strengths will find much of value in the scientific method. For those who are already certain about the cause-effect relationships behind the abduction experience, and who are unconcerned about demonstrating these relationships to anyone else, such evaluations and demonstrations are of little value.

Here is a simple exercise to illustrate my point. Ask yourself what kind of questions you now focus on in regard to your personal interests in the abduction experience. Let's say you are interested in such questions as "which factors might be responsible for the abduction experience and which can be eliminated?"; "how might one demonstrate that recall for these experiences are veridical?"; "how common are particular aspects of the experience?; "are there any similarities among individuals sharing such experiences"?; "which treatment modalities are most effactive when dealing with trauma related to the abduction experience"? Questions such as these are certainly amenable to the scientific method. For you, how to apply the scientific method to the abduction experience, and how to use the experiences themselves in this process, are meaningful issues.

On the other hand, let's say you are interested in such questions as "what is the aliens' ultimate purpose?"; "are aliens corporeal or spiritual beings?"; "do they come from this dimension or some other?"; "are experiencers really reincarnated aliens"? Almost certainly such questions (these are not picked at random — read Mack's book) are beyond the scope of contemporary scientific methodology (I'm aware of the various "ask the aliens" approaches, but I think most readers will recognize that such "answers"

cannot be accepted as data derived independent of the abduction experience itself). If you are interested in such questions, you have only the reported experiences on which to rely, and almost certainly will find the scientific method irrelevant to your interests.

If you will forgive the hackneyed tautology, what I am saying here is that science can only address "scientific" questions: scientific questions are those that can be addressed by the methods of science. Quite frankly, not everyone interested in the abduction experience is interested in scientific questions (in some minds, these questions have already been "answered" and so the scientific research in regard to them need not be carried out). Only those interested in such questions will find a discussion of science and experience to be a meaningful issue in regard to the abduction experience. This is not meant as a value judgment regarding the relative worth of scientific versus other forms of knowledge, but as a statement reflecting the inherent characteristics of the methodology. Those interested in other than scientific questions will find nothing but the experiences themselves to use as "data", and issues regarding the use of experience and the scientific method will, therefore, be largely moot.

Consequently, in specifically addressing the points raised by the respondents, the following comments are meant for those interested in scientific questions regarding the abduction experience. Other readers will find my remarks purely academic.

1. *Can knowledge be gained through "experience"?*

Of course. All knowledge is gained through experience. Intuition, instinct, memory, perception, exposure to the subjective reports of others, and scientific observation are just different modes of experience. The scientific method evolved to provide a particular kind of experience; that in which observations stem from known (controlled) conditions. As professionals, scientists rely most heavily on this particular form of experience, but as individuals they ignore no source of experience.

2. *Is knowledge that is gained through scientific observation necessarily more accurate than knowledge gained through other modes of experience?*

No, not necessarily. Science, like any other approach to knowledge, is fallible. It is designed to increase the probability that we will interpret our experiences (observations) correctly, but like other forms of knowing, it cannot guarantee it.

3. *Does science really have "little use" for personal experience as data?*

To the contrary, personal experience (subjective report) is used as data in some of the most respected and established areas of scientific psychology (the historical controversy about the role of "consciousness" in psychology notwithstanding). It would not be possible to study perception, memory, emotion, cognition, and many other traditional areas of psychological inquiry without using a subject's personal report as data. However, when a subjective report cannot be related to known antecedent conditions its usefulness as data is compromised. In regard to the abduction experience, the scientific method requires that this testimony be related to other data so that competing explanations for the experience can be evaluated. It does not require that experiencer testimony be ignored.

4. *Must (as Mack has stated) "the reality and significance of the abduction phenomenon [be confronted in regard to] the "politics of ontology"?*

I believe this to be neither necessary nor productive. It is not necessary because there is much that those working with the abduction experience can do to address the scientific community and the media on their own terms (see below). It is not productive because it further polarizes the groups in question. As I pointed out in my review of Abduction, Mack's attempt to do battle in this arena has been almost uniformly unsuccessful in the journalistic and scientific communities. I do not know what direct effect his arguments have had with the general public. But if science and the media are indeed responsible for the beliefs of the general public, then dealing with these communities on their own terms will be a more effective way to impact the general public than trying to convince society to devalue science as a source of knowledge.

5. *Is the abduction experience beyond the scope of science?* (if this is true, the previous argument would be untenable)

As discussed earlier, the abduction experience is not beyond the scope of science, at least in terms of testing and demonstrating basic causal or correlative relationships (i.e., in answering scientific questions). "Hypothesis testing" has already been successful in examining aspects of the abduction experience (e.g., studying the personality profiles of experiencers; comparing abduction memories that have been hypnotically assisted with those that have not, determining the susceptibility of experiencers to hypnotic suggestion). Yet, there is much more that has not been done (e.g., determining the prevalence of abduction experiences in known sleep disorders and the prevalence of sleep disorders among known experiencers; determining if the "highly specific details" reported to emerge in independent abduction accounts occur, as some investigators take for granted, at a level beyond chance; conducting a properly controlled re-examination of the relationship between simulated and "real" hypnotically assisted abduction accounts; more carefully examining the content and circumstances surrounding the emergence of "shared" abduction experiences; etc.). These studies are methodologically straightforward, and can serve to support or eliminate antecedent conditions that have been offered as explanations.

That having been said, the track record for science so far is meager because too many scientists (on both sides of the debate) have resorted to argument rather than research; and too many more have ignored the phenomenon altogether. In such a climate, it is understandable that some experiencers, investigators, and therapists are frustrated or offended by the failures of scientists to apply their skills correctly or at all. But these failures should not be attributed to the scientific method itself. I am convinced that whatever its limitations, it is a mistake to devalue the role of science in understanding the abduction phenomenon, and that those who are dissatisfied with what science has yet produced would serve the field better by demanding more from science rather than less.

On Persinger

I still find it curious that Michael Persinger retains a "corner" in BAE, implying some prominence to his work. He has now published 75 articles based on his Tectonic Strain Theory in P&MS, largely unchallenged. Excepting two critical notes by myself in the same journal, it seems that the TST is more or less accepted by the perceptual psychology community.

A distinction should be made between his temporal lobe research involving EM effects on memory, and the TST theory of UFOs. The former may be quite significant; the latter is almost certainly spurious.

In the first of four Persinger articles in the last issue of BAE, he and Derr correlate UFOs with fluid injection into the upper crust. It is said that the "results support the hypothesis that luminous phenomena (i.e. UFOs) ... are associated with natural hydroseismicity..."

One thing absent from Persinger's correlative studies is raw data. In one of my published criticisms of his work, I pointed out that his "positive correlations" employed UFO report data from unreliable sources. In fact, the supplier of the UFO data warned against using it for statistical studies because of serious flaws in its collection. Many of the UFOs in the source publication were later identified as aircraft, stars and other conventional phenomena. Indeed, debunkers would suggest that there were *no* "real" UFOs in the data at all. Given that, what could the correlations actually imply? Furthermore, in many of Persinger's studies, including the one in question, the correlations were only significant when "temporal lags and spatial diffusion" were allowed. That is, a UFO/injection correlation was only present when data allowed for periods of months to lapse and significant distances between the two disparate events were allowed. Would not a stronger correlation or effect be realized if the mechanism did not need such "diffusion?"

In my own studies of Canadian UFO reports, more than 95% of the cases are deemed definite, probable or possible misidentifications of ordinary objects. It is possible that with further study, the remaining few cases could be removed from the "unexplained" category. And even in these cases, I would hesitate before recommending that such data be used as a statistical sample. In order to even consider Persinger and Derr's correlations as significant, a presentation of their data and a thorough analysis of their UFO data must be made available.

In the paper by Bisson and Persinger regarding the incidence of brain tumours correlated with UFOs, the same cautions apply. Even they admit that the effect was only significant for men and not women. Given a "window of opportunity" of ten years (!) to correlate with one month (!) of UFO activity near Sudbury, it is not at all surprising to find "something" in the data! This is apart from the fact that the Sudbury area, like most of Canada, experienced many UFOs from 1970 to 1980, and most (if not all) of these were explainable as conventional phenomena, unrelated to tectonic stress.

Persinger's correlations would *only* apply if and only if the UFOs used as data represented real objects positively identified as originating due to tectonic-stress-induced electromagnetic radiation. Since such an exhaustive analysis has not been done, and because the UFOs have a very good chance at being explained as other phenomena, the correlations may not be meaningful.

As for his work on temporal lobe phenomena within the laboratory, he might be onto something!

Chris Rutkowski

Response to "Careless Citations"

An Open Letter to David Hufford, Ph.D.

Dear David:

Your powerful eloquence and logical thinking ("Careless Citations", Bulletin of Anomalous Experience, February 1994.) almost succeeded in getting me to stop writing . . . almost, but not quite! You see, I know that I am one of those people whose citations are less than impeccable ("careless", perhaps, to use your word but, I hope, not biased or distorted, and certainly not intentional). To wit: a couple of years ago you were reading a draft of a piece I had written and pointed out (correctly, I might add) that there were a couple of lengthy paragraphs which were extracted almost verbatim from your book The Terror That Comes in the Night (U. Penn Pr., 1982) and for which no citation was given. I probably would have picked that up in the final draft ... but perhaps not ... and therefore I must plead guilty, at least in principle.

While I agree with you that distorted or biased citations, especially those that are intentional, are reprehensible, there are those of us who don't have the same detailed, orderly, logical mental faculties as do you "professor types." One might argue that all it takes is a little "care" to avoid "careless" citations, but I submit to you that for some of us, all the care in the world would not be enough to prevent our making (what you might consider to be) egregious citation errors. You see, David, one of the challenges I am dealing with is that of a learning style difference. In accordance with your "Cultural Source Hypothesis," some people, such as professor types, might be predisposed to apply the label "learning disability."

For many, many years, I accepted as valid the pejorative label and, as a result, felt badly about mysef, labeling myself "dumb", "stupid", and "careless', among other things ... this despite havng successfully graduated (with honors) from a prestigious Eastern prep school and an Ivy League College. Not wanting to feel bad, one of my ways of coping was to

not write; another was to avoid any further education. Then, a while back, thanks to a Neuropsychological exam, a Mensa test, and some darned good therapy, I discovered that I did, in fact, have some intellectual strengths ... it was just that they weren't those that were highly valued by the "Cultural Sources" (hypothetical or not) to which I had been exposed. I then went on to got two doctorate degrees (from "Sources" not accredited by the "Culture", I might add) and have since been having a ball writing about those things I want to write about in the ways I want to write about them.

Admittedly, my writings are experiential, intuitive, and holistic rather than factual, linear, and logical ... and, I suspect, may (be calculated to) drive "professor types" to distraction. However, it is what I do well and it is what I enjoy and, while your concerns are noted and will be taken under advisement, if I am to continue vvriting, I will have to do so in a way that honors my own strengths rather than allowing myself to be paralyzed by somebody else's rules and standards.

David Ritchey

P.S.: Perhaps you will recall that my research is showing considerable evidence to the effect that those individuals who have learning style differences are more likely than the norm to have anomalous experiences

Praise and Suggestions

I am thoroughly enjoying the BAE, though as a non-professional some of the technical jargon gurgles over my head. Please encourage your contributors to give one explanation of the more exotic acronyms in their effusions.

I'm in favour of your diversifying the contents and also would like to see smaller, more frequent issues. One of the advantages, it seems to me, would be to restrain some of your more verbose contributors. For instance,did we really need two lengthy reviews on "Abduction"? Another under-edited article in the current issue is "UFO Abductions and Race Fear" — definitely a bee-in-the-bonnet item, as Mizrach seems to admit in the last paragraph, after using up 2¼ pages to make some dubious assertions. For instance, better/quicker methods of reporting UFO appearances may well account for more American UFO sightings; in any event, in recent years Brazil and Mexico have swarmed with UFOs (definitely unwaspy places) and what about Russia?

I realise how much work is involved in putting out this Journal. Thanks for your continuing enthusiasm.

Joan Seager

Contribution and Subscription Information

Bulletin of Anomalous Experience is a networking newsletter about the UFO abduction phenomenon and related issues, for mental health professionals and interested scientists. BAE is a forum for presentation of ideas and information, and debate of same. Comments on anything you see here, brief or lengthy, are encouraged. So are opinion pieces, and notices of books, articles or journals you think are relevant to this field. Participate!

Our editorial policy was best described by Hilary Evans, who said we try to "comfortably tread the narrow path between the groves of academia and the dust and heat of the marketplace, inquiring and suggesting, not asserting or insisting." We publish most anything, whether we agree with it or not, as long as it's on topic.

Material for publication in computer-readable format is especially welcome . I can accept 3.5" or 5.25" diskettes. I run Word for Windows 2.0, but you can also send files in ASCII format. (Macintosh users: I don't have a Mac-to-PC conversion program, so please send files that are readable on an IBM system). If you are online, you can also e-mail material to me at my Internet address (see below).

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The Anomalist

The Anomalist
Edited and published by Patrick Huyghe and Dennis Stacy Published twice a year. Each issue US$12.50 (includes postage and handling); makes cheques payable to Dennis Stacy, and send to him at P.O.Box 12434, San Antonio, Texas 78212

This collaboration by two well-known writers on the paranormal (both have published articles in OMNI, and Dennis Stacy is editor of MUFON UFO Journal) is a delight. The articles are informative and serious enough to satisfy the curious critical mind but with a deft touch which leaves the reader entertained as well as educated. This is an impressive achievement considering the wide range of topics: Cargo cults, alien writing, dinosaurs, spontaneous human combustion and astrology. Martin Kottmeyer, Ingo Swann, Paul Rydeen, Martin Cannon and Loren Coleman are among the contributors in this inaugural issue. Kudos to all.

Some excerpts:

from the introduction by Stacy and Huyghe:

No one really knows where one mystery ends and another begins, where one boundary or category begins, ends or merges with another. Or for that matter, whether the whole notion of boundaries is applicable to the issue at hand. One measures a circle, after all, beginning anywhere. That is why we are not The Ufologist, or The Parapsychologist, or The Cryptozoologist, or some other Mystery-ologist. That is why we are The Anomalist. What we are trying to do is explore and, perhaps, solve for several unknowns at once.

That, in essence, is the reason for The Anomalist. It is, to be quite honest, a product borne of frustration. We are tired of the lack of courage, the lack of wonder, and the lack of curiousity that often passes for scholarship. We intend to make this publication a serious yet entertaining showcase for presentations of enigmatic data and radical ideas of all kinds.

...We are interested in investigating all layers of reality with a particular fondness for those subjects lying on the shadowy margins of the scientific world. At times we may even be critical of science, for its ostrich-like stance in the presence of the mountain of anomalies it tends to disregard, but we are by no means anti-science. On the contrary, we would argue that no subject should be beyond the realm of science.
...

from an interview with Mario Pazzaglini on his work with alien writing:

...Any way to ever hit paydirt in this work?
Pazzaglini: I try not to keep that framework in my head. That will spoil it I think. I don't think I know enough to say more. I can recognize some of the patterns now. I can recognize if a script looks like another script. I can do a few simple tricks. I'm going to continue collecting and I would like to get a computer program so I can put all the symbols into a pattern recognition system. But otherwise I try to keep away from what one person calls "the lust of results." For me, premature belief only destroys perception of the possible. Belief excludes and it's too early to do this. I am not sure even if this is an entirely external or internal phenomenon — or perhaps a mix. It could be that we humans, as a group of beings, can elicit from reality what only begin as our needs, thoughts, and wishes. Could there be a psychoid element, as Jung puts it, that is able to materialize what is internal? Or are we really being spoken to through the noise and chatter of this material? Is this something a process, purely within ourselves, or a complex message system from the outside, from an unknown external source? I'm not sure.

from Cargo of the Gods? by Paul Rydeen

Cargo cults and saucer groups are alike in having a millenial ideal; the forms this ideal takes are remarkably similar. They both have a non-personal entity (the ancestors and the Space Brothers) expected to manifest via mechanical vehicles (planes, ships, UFOs) bringing cargo (chocolate bars, radios, and postnuclear peacekeeping technology) and a just salvation. The impetus for both groups is not necessarily the material goods, but the status they bring. Cargo devotees merely want to turn the tables, as it were, and restore a civilization they perceive to be ill. Saucer contactees don't literally yearn for cargo, but more often for knowledge or wisdom. The changes they desire are sometimes economic, as with cargo, but are also pacifist, environmental and spiritual. In short, they too want to heal our cultural sickness by making us all equals. They want someone to enforce nuclear peace, do away with economic disparities, fix the environment, and return us to a Golden Age.

One of the most striking features of these philosophies is the "alien" nature of their saviors, echoing gnostic sentiments of two millenia ago. Unlike the usual messianic movements, cargo cults and contactees are singular in expecting salvation to come from the outside rather than arising from within.

The cargo cults arose in response to direct outside influence: colonization and subjugation by an advanced intelligence. So who or what is colonizing us? Are extraterrestrials actually contacting us, or is the cargo parallel inaccurate in this instance? I'm not saying that we are being visited by aliens; perhaps the whole thing is a psychological response to conditions similar to those that produced the original cargo cults. The "higher" intelligence may only be one more unknown aspect of our own minds, or it may be a defense mechanism against something we don't understand or can't accept. Then again — as the contactees have been telling us all along — it may be the next step in human evolution.

The New Ufologist

The New UFOlogist
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Subscriptions are £8 for 4 issues (UK funds in bank draft or money order) or £2.50 for a single issue.

The New UFOlogist is a new journal of UFOlogy by a six-person editorial board including Jenny Randles, Albert Budden, Paul Fuller, Rodney Howarth, Michael Hudson and Mike Wooten. Though most of the articles in this inaugural issue are by British writers, the board intends TNU to be a European journal of UFOlogy. The emphasis is on investigative reporting of UFO-related anomalies and thoughtful consideration of a wide range of hypotheses. The first issue issue fully satisfies their objectives of producing "an informative and responsible high quality journal which has been designed in such a way that any scientist could show it to their skeptical colleagues and not be ashamed of doing so."

Articles in this issue include Paul Devereux's exploration of shamanism, DMT experiences and earth lights in various cultures as they may relate to abduction experiences; an exploration by Albert Budden of ball lightning as an explanation for animal mutilation cases, Paul Fuller and Jenny Randles on crop circles, reports on cases being investigated, and a column on "The Skeptical View."

Highly recommended.

An excerpt:
From "Crop Circles: Do They Have A Future And Did They Have A Past," by Paul Fuller & Jenny Randles

...

As the "science" of "cereology" sinks into a soup of its own making it has become clear that the whole phenomenon was a typical example of how the UFO community allows itself to fall for the most audacious of hoaxes. It is also a perfect example of how scientific anomalies are treated by both Proponents and Skeptics. The emergence of the phenomenon during the 1980s gave the UFO community a golden opportunity to demonstrate that it was no longer interested in promoting exotic solutions to the UFO evidence. Jenny Randles and myself pleaded with the UFO community to take that opportunity to demonstrate that UFOlogists were capable of being skeptical objective researchers. Our reward was to be threatened with legal action and to be accused in one of UFOlogy's "leading" journals of being "two of the most monumental and egregious liars at large in our country today". Predictably the response of most other UFO groups and magazines around the globe was to leap upon the crop circles as proof of the alien mythology invented by Ray Palmer and his science fiction associates in 1947. By doing so the UFO proponents demonstrated their total unfamiliarity with the history of their own subject — that hoaxers repeatedly try to expose UFOlogists as gullible believers in exotic phenomena. By searching for an exotic solution to the evidence these UFOlogists betrayed UFOlogy for their own personal gain.

Instead of considering hoaxing or a "natural" solution these researchers immediately promoted crop circles as proof of "non human intelligences." They should have understood that they held a grave responsibility to UFOlogy to apply Occam's Razor — to apply the simplest solution to the data — but instead they were guilty of creating a supernatural mythology which ultimately condemned hundreds of farmers around the world to endure wanton damage to their crops by mass trespass and hoaxing.

Allergies and Aliens -- The Visitation Experience: An Environmental Health Issue

by Albert Budden

73 pages, softcover.
Available from Discovery Times Press, St. Lukes House, 2709 Sandycombe Road, Kew, Surrey, TW9 3NP, England. Price: £5 (or US$10 or CDN$14)

Mr. Budden suggests that encounter and abduction experiences "are the mental and physiological products of a range of environmental illnesses, shared by and coped with in their commonest form, by about 20% of the population." The aliens are images generated from one's own mind as a result of the cumulative response to chemical and electromagnetic pollution. The mind produces these images in order to warn the individual that their health is at risk.

Mr. Budden's thesis is an interesting and clever synthesis of the works of diverse researchers such as Michael Persinger (whose work Budden cites), Ken Ring (who found in his Omega Project that after extraordinary experiences, individuals tend to become more sensitive to such substances as alcohol and pharmaceuticals), and the group of clinicians and experiencers who believe that the aliens, whatever their origin, are here to warn us about an impending global ecological catastrophe. In presenting this synthesis, and suggesting some intriguing new directions for scientific study of the abduction experience, Mr. Budden has done our field a service.

That being said, I have two criticisms of Allergies and Aliens. First, Mr. Budden draws heavily on the theories and methods of clinical ecology, a field which, at least in North America, has yet to achieve credibility within mainstream medicine. Many of the symptoms Budden cites as attributable to environmental sensitivity ("headaches, palpitations, panic attacks, dizziness,

fainting states, muteness, overwhelming fatigue and weakness, surges of uncontrollable energy, trembling, sweating, undirected anger, mood-swings, depression, manic episodes") are also anxiety symptoms, and some psychiatrists and allergy specialists think that "environmental sensitivity" syndromes are not immunologic illnesses, as clinical ecology claims, but anxiety disorders akin to agoraphobia. Mr. Budden's explanation of the involvement of electromagnetism in developing environmental allergies (see excerpt below) is also controversial. I wondered why, since we are all swimming in a sea of chemicals and electromagnetic pollution, we are not all suffering massive generalized allergic reactions, not to mention encounter experiences.

Another weakness of this book is his reliance on case studies instead of systematic collection and analysis of data to support his hypothesis. Perhaps this omission will be corrected in the future: Allergies and Aliens is really a synopsis of a larger work to be published in the spring of 1995 called UFOs: The Electromagnetic Indictment — The Psychic Nature of Close Encounters.

Despite these criticisms, I still recommend Allergies and Aliens. Mr. Budden presents a thought-provoking original idea which lends itself well to scientific verification. I look forward to follow-up work on these ideas from Mr. Budden and others in the future.

...A more commonplace way to acquire allergies is to be in an electrical or electromagnetic field, such as those from pylons or RF transmitting antennae respectively, and during this time eat or drink something, or be exposed to a common substance that they are already allergic to, such as say, domestic gas. Their body then "remembers" the frequency of the field whilst they are reacting to the allergen, in this example, domestic gas, and when they are exposed to the same frequency again on its own on another occasion, they react allergically. It is as if the allergy to the gas had "rubbed off" on to the signal. Then if they are consuming something or are exposed to a substance that they are not allergic to, such as say, cigarette smoke, and are irradiated by the same frequency as an "allergic field", they will then develop an allergy to that smoke also. It is as if the "allergy signal," picked up the response to the gas and had "infected" their response to cigarette smoke. It is in this way that the population is acquiring allergies, and I know of at least three people who have given up smoking overnight due to this effect.

...

[Sensitivities to commonplace foods and chemicals] are just the beginning of a series of increasingly urgent statements to the individual from his body to mend his or her ways in terms of eating habits and general life situation. If he fails to heed these messages, which may not only be in the form of sensitivities to food, but conversely, may also take the form of substance or food cravings, possibly leading to addiction situations, the mind will be drawn into the communications, and hallucinations and other psychic events may occur (psychic only means "of the mind"). These may begin as weird dreams that have a super, real quality to them, and develop into fully formed figures seen when the person is awake. These commonly appear beside the bed at night. Typical nocturnal hallucinations, which are an attempt to warn the individual that things are not right with the way that the body is being treated, are frighteningly ugly or sinister beings, or on the other hand may be beautiful luminous guardian angels, who appear to tell them with a message in their mind that they are being watched over on the spiritual plane. This is in fact a method by which the mind is trying to calm the allergic individual's system in a very fundamental way, thereby reducing the stress upon their body, otherwise known as the load phenomenon. Such spiritual transformations have been the saving factor for many overloaded allergic individuals. Therefore, the ugly or sinister being is a shock tactic to say "things are going wrong with your body", and the second actually acts upon the problem directly as a load-reducing strategy.

These hallucinations have a direct parallel with dreams, as they are both produced ultimately by the unconscious mind to impart some kind of message to the dreamer which reflects their inner state. Dreams however, are usually less specific in their symbols as they are more concerned with the life-flow of the individual rather than the welfare or otherwise of the physical body. In the latter case the messages are somewhat more urgent and have a greater import to the biological welfare and survival of the allergic individual.

...

The Close Encounter Core

Close encounters involving "aliens", as they are termed by some ufologists, contain messages, the content of which can be traced directly back to the personality, background and health of the individual who experiences them. This content-tracing reveals that the bank of images that they have stored in their unconscious mind, as with dream construction, is drawn upon to express something about their condition. When the mind depicts external fields as alien it will largely use the images that particular person has accumulated from films, television, books, etc., which have shown science-fiction fantasy versions of what aliens look like. As with dreams, it will "customise" these alien versions according to their own expressive needs. As we will see from the close encounter cases given later, the mind does not care if these depictions are totally absurd, as long as they combine the right symbolic features. For example, one EH [environmental hypersensitivity] sufferer living in an extremely electronically polluted area saw three fairies with big oval sparkling wings, space-helmets like goldfish bowls, computer buttons on their chests, silvery streamers hanging from their shoulders and lasers mounted on their pointed pixie hats. They arrived, she reported, in a spaceship the size of a small car but with ski-runners underneath, spoke with her about Jesus whom they knew well, and left with a mince-pie sticking to the end of their silvery-green pointed arms. This woman had just left her church after a life-time membership, had fostered many small children over the years, and had silvery-green streamers on her Christmas tree. This also had a fairy on the top with sparkling wings the same colouration as her "visitors". This encounter occurred on the 4th January, just after Christmas with snow on the ground. Shortly afterwards she had a nervous breakdown and just over two years later died prematurely of a pancreatic malfunction. Three large radio-masts overlooked her house on local hills, about 750 metres away. Three faults crisscrossed beneath the foundations of her house, From this, and many other "close encounters", it is clear that the unconscious mind does not just lift alien types straight out of films or TV, but creates personalised

versions of them. However, also like dreams, there are consistent types of "alien" that are a product of us as a biological system. These images of aliens, which are independently reported across populations are based on the re-occurring irradiation of the same combination of brain areas by similar types of electromagnetic radiation. A good example of this are the formed figures called "greys" (or "grays" in the US) of UFO lore. These are neurological sensory models depicting the electrical stimulation of the visual cortex in the EH subject, where the charge spreads to other brain areas (called the kindling phenomenon). This figure, because the visual areas at the back of the brain have been both sensitised and "zapped", is represented as having all features reduced, except for the eyes which are depicted as oversize at the expense of the rest of the body. ...

...[The grays'] depicted activity of broadly, operating on the body, is a standard reoccuring feature in alien abduction experiences. These apparent operations are there as a central part of the drama because it is the physical body that is actually being interfered with and intruded upon by "alien" fields. In a real sense then, the "aliens" are the fields.

Feature Articles

Symptoms of Alien Abduction? Impressions and Misgivings

by Michael Grosso

Michael Grosso, Ph.D., is professor of philosophy and humanities at Jersey City State College. He is the author of The Final Choice, Frontiers of the Soul *(see BAE 4.1) and* Soulmaker *(see BAE 4.4).*

On May 21, 1994, I was a speaker at the first annual Tampa UFO Convention, produced by a lively, open-minded group known as Project Awareness. (The convention was titled, *UFOs and New Frontiers: Connecting with the Larger Reality.)* I thought it slightly odd that most speakers did not listen to each other's presentations; there were exceptions, and, I am sure, there are good reasons why some speakers may not be able to listen to their colleagues. On the other hand, I could not rid myself of the impression that some presenters were more interested in cultivating their following than the possibility of learning something from colleagues. After all, quite a bit remains rather puzzling about UFO and UFO-related phenomena. Anyway, I tried to listen to as many speakers as I could.

As a result, I was delighted to meet Dr. Karla Turner, an articulate *soi-disant* abductee turned abductee-researcher. What was surprising about Dr. Turner is that although she claims she and her family were "abducted" by *something,* she admits she has no explanation of her experience. In particular, she makes no claims about ETs or spaceships. I found the combination in one person of being an experiencer and a skeptic refreshing. (See her *Taken,* 1994.)

Another surprise of a different sort: I discovered, after listening to Zecharia Sitchin, (whose power to make himself invisible at the convention seemed to rival Padre Pio's), that the epic of Gilgamesh contains an account of a rocket ship taking off and witnessed by the mighty Gilgamesh himself. It happens that I (and my students) read the epic of Gilgamesh twice a year in a course on the humanities that I teach. I have been doing this for about six years now; admittedly, I am not up on my Sumerian cuneiform, (though I have scoured four translations); in any case, I have not been able to find anything in the text that remotely resembles or suggests a rocket ship.

Another speaker who absented himself from colleagues' presentations was Budd Hopkins. However, I attended his workshop titled "Symptoms of Hidden UFO Abductions," and was very much intrigued. It is about the drift of this workshop that I have some misgivings and would like to say a few words.

First, I want to say that I am a skeptic on the question of alien abductions — *skeptic,* in the Greek sense of the word, which implies suspension of judgment, pro or con. I am willing to grant that there is a phenomenologically distinct pattern of behavior describable as "alien abduction," a pattern, moreover, that is very strange, and that may sometimes contain anomalous features. But granting this, I don't think we know enough to say what is causing the experience.

Now, it is well-known that Mr. Hopkins is not a skeptic in the sense I have just cited; on the contrary, he believes that the abduction experience is being caused by extraterrestrials (ETs). He may be right. On the other hand, I had some misgivings about the way he conducted his workshop. My impression was that a more cautious observer might regard Hopkins' workshop as an attempt to recruit believers to his cause; one might even be tempted to say that it worked as a procedure for *creating* such believers. (I am *not* saying that this is Hopkin's conscious intent; not being a mind-reader, I don't know.)

Before I illustrate, two remarks that suggest possible parallels. The first concerns what the psychiatrist Jan Ehrenwald calls "doctrinal compliance" (See the *ESP Experience* [1978]). Ehrenwald makes the observation that patients often comply with their therapists by having appropriate dreams that fit the therapist's theoretic bent. Freudian patients will dream Freudian dreams, Jungian

patients have archetypal dreams, and so on. The idea is that the patient-therapist relationship undergoes a transference with possible telepathic influence. The patient wants to comply with the doctor; to do so apparently serves therapeutic needs.

My other remark deals with a phenomenon well-canvassed by parapsychologists, known as *experimenter effect.* For a long time it has been suspected that certain experimenters, marked perhaps by their commitment and intense enthusiasm (J. B. Rhine, for example) may be the crucial factors in producing extra-chance results in parapsychological experiments. An ESP or PK experiment — or indeed any type of "workshop" involving subtle psychological interactions — creates a situation that may trigger paranormal group dynamics. An enthusiastic, deeply committed leader might be a powerful agent in producing some desired psychological or parapsychological effects.

My impression was that Hopkins' workshop lent itself to possible cases of doctrinal compliance or even experimenter effect. Once we consider the kind of "symptoms" that Hopkins calls attention to, this idea seems worthy of consideration. Hopkins didn't say much about episodes of so-called missing time, strange paralyses, or unexplained marks on the body. But clearly, by themselves, or even as part of a larger syndrome, they hardly imply alien abduction, since so many alternative explanations are possible. Missing-time experiences are well reported in the literature of abnormal and supernormal psychology. Distortion of time-sense is typical of a variety of altered states of consciousness; paralysis is associated with hagging and other paranormal experiences. (I've interviewed Marian visionaries who describe such paralysis.) Also, anyone who knows something about psychosomatic medicine and the psychophysics of hagiography is not going to take unexplained marks on the body, assuming they are genuine, as necessarily suggestive of alien abduction.

Before I go on, I should remind the reader that Mr. Hopkins disapproves of trying to understand the abduction narratives he focuses upon in relation to other bodies of related data such as folklore, religion, near-death experience, parapsychology, and archetypal psychology. Hopkins calls such synoptic efforts at understanding abduction stories "stewpot thinking." I am afraid this expression is not very helpful, and merely betrays Hopkins' own rather parochial thinking. To understand the multifaceted UFO mystery, we need to enlarge the pot and whip up the stew with all the ingredients of a thoroughgoing multi-disciplinary approach.

But let's look at some of the symptoms of abduction that Hopkins stressed during his workshop. Speaking for myself, were I inclined to believe I was abducted, I could, with a modicum of stretching, apply most of them to myself — at least on occasion. For example, Hopkins mentioned as one of his "hidden" abduction symptoms having episodes of unreasonable panic. Well, who hasn't at one time or another had such episodes?

People with phobias — and they are legion — have them regularly. Hopkins gave as an example passing a certain place that causes one unreasonable fear. I can imagine all sorts of circumstances where one might pass a house, road, or odd scene that evokes a mood of anxiety, menace, or foreboding, but which might be due to any number of internally generated associations.

Low self-esteem is another alleged possible symptom of a repressed abduction experience, according to Hopkins. The alien abuse of one's personal integrity may leave one with a vague sense of violation and hence lowered self-esteem. Of course, vast numbers of human beings perennially suffer from low self-esteem and the possible reasons are surely legion. This is far too general a characteristic to cite as singling out a repressed alien abduction syndrome.

Hopkins suggests that feelings of dissociation from the body and from one's sexuality may be symptomatic of hidden abduction memories. Once again, this "symptom" is far too general to serve as a persuasive indicator of such an anomalous experience as alien abduction. The psychiatrist R. D. Laing has written about the "schizoid" condition, a general tendency of dissociation from the body as a routine response to human existence itself; and, of course, the Freudian school features sexual difficulties as practically an inevitable byproduct of having to endure civilization and its malaise. This "symptom" is likely to apply to untold numbers of people and scarcely seems a compelling diagnostic trait for identifying hidden abduction memories. In particular, it may apply to people who have suffered child abuse — or, to people who think they have, as a result of irresponsible caregivers.

Ditto for the next symptom given by Hopkins— the inability to trust people. Once again Hopkins has fixed on a vague, pervasive feeling that has an infinite range of possible explanations and could apply to any one who has been through emotionally damaging experiences as well as individuals who suffer from full blown "paranoid" disorders. To suggest that free-floating suspiciousness may be part of a hidden alien abduction syndrome is about as convincing as saying that people who feel generally upbeat about life are the beneficiaries of hidden guardian-angel-syndrome.

One more possible symptom, slightly more promising because more specific, is, according to Hopkins, phobias of falling through the floor or going through walls, presumably based on hidden memories of abductees being swifted out of their beds through solid walls into alien spaceships. This type of phobia, however, is far more plausibly explained by any number of parapsychological experiences which have been well documented. Passing through solid walls and floors is a staple of ghostly phenomena and out-of-body experiences, which is one reason why some "stewpot thinkers" like myself believe that to study ufology without parapsychology would be like trying to mount a theory of evolution without modern genetics.

The pattern of symptoms that Hopkins suggests may indicate a hidden abduction syndrome describes a generally unhappy human being; it is almost a profile of victims of civilized life. I can hardly imagine a person, prone to dwell on the general malaise, who might not honestly be able to stop and say to herself or himself. "Gee, maybe I have been abducted by nasty aliens; maybe that is the explanation of my fear, mistrust, sexual unhappiness, alienation, phobias, panic and desperation." And what a fascinating way to account for one's unhappy consciousness!

In the course of my weekend discussions with various people at the convention, I spoke to a woman who does

psychic readings. She has been doing readings with people interested in alien abductions, and surprised me with her observation that many people she has dealt with seemed to *want* to be counted among those who qualify as abductees. Perhaps these were some of the people I noticed nodding agreeably with Budd Hopkins as he reeled off his list of symptoms of alien abduction.

Finally, let me draw an analogy between belief in alien abduction and belief in past-life regression. Past life regressions may have therapeutic value; they may "explain" and hence alleviate distressing symptoms, whether or not they are literally true. Responsible therapists who use past life regression, like Roger Walsh and Raymond Moody, are anything but dogmatic in their claims about the literal truth of such regressions. They focus on therapy, not ontology. Likewise, alien abduction stories may serve therapeutic purposes for some people, whether they are literally true or not. Just as there is some good, suggestive evidence for reincarnation, as unearthed by conscientious researchers like Ian Stevenson, there may be some truly anomalous alien abduction reports. In the pursuit of evidence for these authentic reports, however, researchers need to take into account the unconscious force of doctrinal compliance as well as the equally subtle phenomenon of experimenter effect. The field of anomalistics is loaded with booby traps — "walk softly," should be our motto, "and carry a big ladle."

"Man Mounts Alien Defense In Child Molestation Case"

NEWS FLASH!

DATELINE: PEORIA, IL
Man Mounts Alien Defense In Child Molestation Case

In the Peoria County Court yesterday Joe Dokes, 49, pleaded innocent to charges by his daughter, Mrs. Susan Smith, 27, that he molested her repeatedly between the ages of 5 and 17. Instead Mr. Dokes says the molestations were done by 'the critters" who, he says, live on another world.

Mr. Dokes claimed that Mrs. Smith's recollections of sexual molestation were actually a result of numerous temporary nighttime kidnappings by these creatures from another planet. Mr. Dokes' lawyer said that this is the first time in history that a defendant in a molestation case has mounted an "alien defense." The prosecutor reacted to Mr. Dokes' defense claim by stating that the memories of the daughter were quite precise in identifying her father as being involved in the molestation events. He said, furthermore, that the idea of alien abductions is "preposterous. The defendant will have to prove that alien abductions actually occur before he can begin to argue that his daughter was the subject of one or more abductions." But Mr. B. Gee Baley, Mr. Dokes' lawyer, said that numerous books published over the last few years, including one by a Harvard psychiatrist, have proven that abductions do occur and, furthermore, that sometimes abductions have been mistaken for sexual molestation.

Mr. "PJ" Crass, a local author who has written books that say UFOs and abductions don't exist, said that Mr. Dokes might be innocent because of the false memory syndrome. Mr. Crass, who filed a "friend of the court" brief today, said that some people, for reasons we don't understand, have memories of things that "just plain didn't happen." He said, "We don't know why, but these memories seem to the people to be just as convincing as memories of events which actually did happen. Perhaps these people are just plain crazy. This is just another example of the fact that you can't accept verbal testimony, especially emotional testimony, at face value."

When asked about his reaction to PJ's brief, Mr. Baley said that he would be happy to use any means to defend his client, but that the alien defense was chosen by his client who believes that he, too, is an abductee. Mr. Baley became famous when he used the "depraved because I was deprived" defense for Adolf Stalin, a serial killer who claimed that he killed people because his mother didn't love him and give him lots of toys when he was a child.

Judge Itsal Acrock of the 33rd Circuit Court set the trial date on April 1, 1995 in order to give the participants plenty of time to prepare their cases. He also requested psychiatric examinations of the defendant and his accuser. Rumor has it that he also suggested a psychiatric examination of the defendant's lawyer.

Commentary by Bruce Maccabee, Ph.D.
You saw it here first, folks!

As you may have guessed, the above news release is not true. I made it all up. However, it describes something I have, in the last year, been expecting to see within the next few months or years as a result of the recent real lawsuits of parents by their children. The crystallization of the idea into the above semi-jocular "news release" was spurred by the following sentences in the new book by Dr. John Mack, Abductions (Scribners, 1994; page 18):

"'There is not a single abduction case in my experience or that of other investigators ... that has turned out to have masked a history of sexual abuse or any other traumatic cause. *But the reverse has frequently occurred — that an abduction history has been revealed in cases investigated for sexual or other traumatic cause.*" [my emphasis]

So, could something like the court case described above actually occur? You bet! I'm a little bit surprised it hasn't happened already. But I'm not a lot surprised, because, at least up until now, any lawyer would have to think twice

about trying to prove that abductions are real before trying to prove that the accuser was actually an abductee. But as of now, this month and year, there has been a quantum jump in the credibilty of the idea of UFO abductions, thanks to Dr. Mack's book. It is not easy to read. It is not a "thriller." It is more like a textbook of what happens in abduction cases. As of this writing I have not finished reading it. I may have more comments next time after I do finish it. I would simply like to point out that Dr. Mack takes a "hopeful" attitude toward abduction events. He believes that there is some positive value for humanity in these events. Let's hope he's right.

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Testing The Boundaries

by Martin Kottmeyer

Martin Kottmeyer is a scholar of the paranormal whose works have appeared in Magonia, Archaeus, The Anomalist, and Alien Scripture.

Five years ago, I wrote a paper arguing the population of abductees seemed to have a nonrandom proportion of people exhibiting a cluster of psychological traits labelled by Ernest Hartmann with the expression 'thin boundaries.' Boundary theory is admittedly not a 'sexy' topic in psychological circles. Indeed it is rather obscure. It is a fuzzy concept, though no worse than many in current use. Though I was excited by the explanatory value of the concept, the reaction in the literature was a dismissive yawn for the most part. I never wrote about it again.

John Mack's recent book has lured me back to this subject. It makes my case so effortlessly, so inadvertently, I am willing to risk boring the abduction research community one more time, because I can be brief. Rather than rehash the theory, I am simply going to emphasize some observations congruent with theory.

Thin boundaries tend to make people more creative, empathic, sensitive, and unconventional. As I read the abduction literature, I am repeatedly impressed how abductees tend to exhibit backgrounds with creative and artistic features. I've noted dozens and they seem present in a proportion far beyond what I see in my part of the country. Psychiatrists and therapists are provably present at a level close to a hundred times greater than one would statistically expect on the basis of government figures giving the number of mental health professionals in the U.S.

Mack's book starkly illustrates the high proportion of thin boundary characteristics. Consider Carlos: a fine arts professor who draws, paints, writes poetry, drama, novels, and is involved in theatrical productions. His empathic side is demonstrated by work with handicapped people, the elderly, and the mentally ill. Consider Joe: a psychotherapist with a professional development firm and a designer. He is so empathic he experiences the contractions of his pregnant wife. He also displays a complex and total identification with the aliens strongly reminiscent of thin boundary activity described by Grof in his work with LSD experiencers. (see Stanislav Grof's Realms of the Human Unconscious, pp. 178-90.)

Also in his population we see an actor-filmmaker-aspiring songwriter (Scott), a music student attending graduate school in psychology (Catherine), a housewife who fills hundreds of pages with poetry and extensive philosophical ideas (Jerry), a social worker (Sheila), an acupuncturist (Peter), and a highly creative and innovative businessman (Arthur). These 8 of Mack's 13 subjects are sufficient to base my case on. The remainder however also have evidence worth noting.

A down-to-earth home-builder like Dave would normally be expected to have thick boundaries, but he is highly unconventional in the rest of his life: Tibetan Buddhism, shamanism, karate, alternate realities, and past lives. Most telling of all is the detail he is into dream mastery, a skill a thick boundaried individual would have no need for. Paul is described as a sensitive man who always felt foreign and adopted. Ed, a technician, was always being told, "Boy, is he weird." These two recall Hartmann's finding that thin-boundaried people tend to be perceived as "different" while growing up. Sara specializes in ESP study, explores spirituality, and felt unfulfilled in a conventional life. She experiences odd things like being gone from her body for a couple days. She also calls herself a premier ghost story teller. Eva, the CPA assistant, resists categorization. The comment that she suppressed her creativity in deferring to her father is faintly interesting, but I won't quibble about one exception.

The paucity of conventional employment and conventional lifestyles should be evident here. If there are any objections to be made, I trust they are basically only that Mack's sample is small and we do not know that it is representative. Conceded. There is only one way to make a better, more solid case. Some researcher is going to have to assemble an appropriately larger sample of abduction experiencers and give them The Boundary Questionnaire, developed by Hartmann and included in his book Boundaries in the Mind (Basic, 1991). Anyone interested?

Further Reading:

Kottmeyer, Martin "Abduction: The Boundary Deficit Hypothesis." Magonia #32 March 1989 pp. 3-7.

From the Scientific Literature

Trance and Possession in Bali

Trance and Possession in Bali: A Window on Western Multiple Personality, Possession Disorder and Suicide
Luhketut Suryani & Gordon D. Jensen
Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford, Singapore, & New York, 1993.

"Leak"

To a Balanese, the world is filled with gods and spirits. It is primarily the supernatural phenomena that are at the core of many activities of daily life, including ceremonies, rituals, dances, plays, possession, physical and mental illnesses, and healing. These supernatural phenomena include demons, witchcraft or black magic, and leak (spirits). Evil spirits are often present. For example, one should not start a journey at high noon or at dusk (about 6 p.m.) because it is believed that evil spirits come out then and are more likely to disturb, capture, or possess one at these times. These spirtis are the focus of exorcistic treatment by the balian [traditional healer]. Physicians and psychiatrists in Bali who practise Western techniques need to know about the supernatural and the work of the balian in order to be effective.

Leak (pronounced 'lay ack' and often spelled leyak or lejak) are witch-like spirits or creatures that are transformations of real people who live in the community. People who have the ability to become leak can change themselves into other things, such as an animal, a light, or the wind, depending on their power, and they can travel anywhere. The wind is considered to be the highest or strongest type of leak. Some individuals who become leak are believed to derive their ability from an amulet purchased from a sorcerer. Some persons in a village are generally regarded as leak while others are believed to be leak by certain individuals. Almost any disliked acquaintance presents a potential danger because of the possibility that he/she may be transformed into a leak at any time. People who have special perception can recognize leak even when they change their forms. Leak can practice black magic and thereby initiate illness of all kinds, and they can disturb people to the point of causing death. They generally come out at night and are likely to frequent cemeteries. According to the beliefs of the people, Halloween-like activities occur; the goddess of death meets at midnight to dance and feast on the living blood of the dead brought back to life; entrails hang in trees, cauldrons catch dripping blood, and the roots of trees wind in and out of the skulls and bones (McPhee, 1946)[A House in Bali, NY, J.D. Day Co, Issued as an Oxford Univ. Press paperback, 1979, reprinted Singapore, Oxford Univ. Press, 1986]

McPhee (1946) described one of his experiences thus:

"It was perhaps a week later that I awoke again, late in the night, with the same strange feeling that someone had called. It was an unusually warm night, and I went outside on to the veranda. I could not believe my eyes.

"Across the valley, halfway down the hillside, a row of lights glowed with a soft pure brillance. They seemed to move ever so slightly, floating up and down as though anchored. Suddenly they went out, as suddenly went on again, but now to shine in a perpendicular line, one above the other. They merged slowly, until only the central one remained, which now began to float slowly up the valley. All at once it vanished. But within a minute the lights were shining in a row once more, far to the north.

"I went to rouse Durus and Sampih, who were sleeping in the next room. Look! I said. What lights can these possibly be? They are too pale for lamps, and besides there are no paths where they are moving.

"The leyaks, said Durus, softly, almost inaudibly. They must be from Bangkasa [the village across the valley] . . . or from somewhere in the north, he added after a while.

"We stood silently watching this magic display. The lights glowed and died, came closer together, spread rapidly out in a long line. Slowly they floated back once more to where I had first seen them. One by one they went out, until only a single light remained. But all at once it was gone. The valley was in darkness.

"All the next day I was haunted by the weird beauty of the scene I had witnessed the night before. It was as if the stars had descended. If it had not been for Durus and Sampih I should have been unable to believe it had not been part of a dream. But when I mentioned it to Chokorda Rahl, and later to the perbekel in Pliatan, they were not suprised. Had I awoken out of an uneasy sleep? With a feeling of suffocation? There was only one explanation. Sorcery was in the air once more. It had only begun, and no one knew what was to follow."

Such experiences are reminiscent of Westerners' reports of UFOs. . . .

Clinical Guidelines in Using Hypnosis in Uncovering Memories of Sexual Abuse

Clinical Guidelines in Using Hypnosis in Uncovering Memories of Sexual Abuse: A Master Class Commentary
Peter Bloom
Int J Clin Exp Hyp XLII (3) July 1994, 173-8

Dr. Bloom presents 13 guidelines to help clinicians presented with requests to facilitate recall of past memories of trauma, particularly sexual abuse. These recommendations are equally applicable to those using hypnosis for anomalous experiences.

1: Primum non nocere [above all, do no harm].

2: "No therapist should ever, either directly or indirectly, suggest abuse outside of a specific therapeutic context — certainly not to a client who is on the phone making a first appointment!" (Yapko, 1993, p. 36).

3: "A therapist must not jump quickly to the conclusion that abuse occurred simply because it is plausible" (Yapko, 1993, p. 36).

4: "A therapist should never simply assume that a client who cannot remember much from childhood is repressing traumatic memories or is in denial" (Yapko, 1993, p. 36).

5: Remember "a client is most vulnerable to suggestion and the untoward influence of leading questions when therapy begins to delve into painful life situations from the past, particularly from childhood"(Yapko, 1993, P. 36).

6: "Therapists ... should be cautious about suggesting that clients cut off communication with their families" (Yapko, 1993, p. 37).

7: "Therapists should reconsider the 'no pain, no gain' philosophy of treatment" (Yapko, 1993, p. 37).

8: The context of therapy is as important as the content.

...while many clinicians sometimes argue successfully that anything that can be done with hypnosis can be done without hypnosis, the context of hypnosis often affects the resultant psychotherapy because of the special expectations it creates.

9: Tolerate ambiguity.

The most difficult task we clinicians face is the ability to maintain our objectivity in the face of intense emotional outpourings during psychotherapy with or without hypnosis. We are trained to accept our patients' perception of events and believe that such support can be soothing and healing. *However, there is nothing in our training that gives us confidence in accepting as true the stories our patients tell us. We always need corroborating evidence.*

Sincerity, conviction, and intense emotional arousal when telling a story are not *prima facie* evidence of truth, nor are such attitudes any more true when elicited under sodium amytal or medical hypnosis.

10: Respect the current science of memory.

...If we keep in mind throughout all our work that memory is not contained in accurate repressed packets of truth, then we can approach the uncovering of such "truth" with the proper caution.

11: Maintain responsibility for making the diagnosis and choosing the treatment.

As licensed professionals, it is our first task to take a full history, to perform a mental status examination, and to formulate our own diagnosis and treatment plan. It is important to avoid solely responding to a patient who says, "I am disturbed by unrecovered memories of early sexual abuse and I want hypnosis to help me recover these memories so I can get on with my life." *To accept such a patient on those terms is to abrogate one's responsibility as a clinician. Any chance for directing subsequent therapy may be lost from the outset.*

12: Pursue alternative diagnoses to account for the symptoms.

13: Historical and narrative truth: Understand the difference.

Clinicians might wish to say something like this to their patients:

> *There is no guarantee that what you experience in hypnosis actually happened. Sometimes hypnotic recollections have no more to do with historical events than do dreams. Automatically accepting the events of a hypnotic reverie as directly representing historical fact would be as unfortunate as accepting the events of a dream as literal representations of a past event. Much as with a dream, what you experience in hypnosis can undoubtedly be exceedingly important, but that does not mean that it is accurate.*

Reference

Yapko, M. (1993, September/October). The Seductions of Memory. The false memory debate. *Family Therapy Networker*, 17, 30-37.

Recent Abstracts

Neurology

Anatomical origin of deja vu and vivid 'memories' in human temporal lobe epilepsy.
Bancaud J Brunet-Bourgin F Chauvel P Halgren E
Brain (1994 Feb) 117 (Pt 1):71-90

Jackson observed that seizures arising in the medial temporal lobe may result in a 'dreamy state', consisting of vivid memory-like hallucinations, and/or the sense of having previously lived through exactly the same situation (deja vu). Penfield demonstrated that the dreamy state can sometimes be evoked by electrical stimulation of the lateral temporal neocortex, especially the superior temporal gyrus. Halgren et al. showed that the dreamy state can be evoked by stimulation of the hippocampal formation and amygdala and Gloor has suggested that it is evoked by lateral stimulation only when the resulting after-discharge spreads medially. In order to resolve the relative importance of these areas, we considered the mental phenomena observed in epileptic patients with electrodes stereotaxically implanted into different brain areas for seizure localization prior to surgical treatment. Sixteen patients, all with seizures involving the temporal lobe, experienced the dreamy state either as a result of spontaneous seizures (nine dreamy states in six patients), or due to electrical stimulation (43 in 14) or to chemical activation (five in three). Deja vu and hallucinations of scenes were often evoked by different stimulations of the same electrode in the same patient. As Jackson had also observed, the dreamy state could occur alone but was often associated with epigastric phenomena and fear, and followed by loss of contact and oro-alimentary automatisms, and then by simple gestural automatisms, all characteristic of partial seizures beginning in the medial temporal lobe. Furthermore, as also emphasized by Jackson, the dreamy state was seldom associated with sensory illusions. Stimulation of either the neocortex (15 occurrences), anterior hippocampus (17) or amygdala (10) could evoke a dreamy state. However, since fewer hippocampal and amygdala leads were stimulated than temporal neocortical, the proportion of medial temporal electrodes where dreamy states could be evoked was much higher than in the neocortex. Most responsive lateral temporal sites were located in the superior temporal gyrus, rather than the middle temporal gyrus which was significantly less responsive. In 85% of dreamy states evoked by medial temporal lobe stimulation, the discharge spread to the temporal neocortex; and in 53% of dreamy states evoked by lateral temporal stimultion, the discharge spread medially. Considering all dreamy states, the amygdala was involved (as the stimulated structure, or as the site of ictal- or after-discharge) in 73% of cases, the anterior hippocampus in 83% and the temporal neocortex in 88%. In every spontaneous seizure where the dreamy state was observed, the amygdala, anterior hippocampus and temporal neocortex were all involved (provided that they were recorded during the seizure). Thus, we conclude that the dreamy state probably depends upon a neuronal network that engages both medial and lateral aspects of the temporal lobe, and that the anterior hippocampus, amygdala and superior temporal gyrus have relatively privileged access to this circuit.

Correlates to Belief in the Paranormal

Functional hemispheric asymmetry and belief in ESP: towards a "neuropsychology of belief".
Brugger P Gamma A Muri R Schafer M Taylor KI
Percept Mot Skills (1993 Dec) 77(3 Pt 2):1299-308

30 right-handed subjects were given a lateralized tachistoscopic lexical-decision task. Subjects' belief in extrasensory perception (ESP) was assessed with a single six-point scale; 16 subjects were designated as believers in ESP and 14 subjects as nonbelievers. Believers in ESP did not exhibit a hemispheric asymmetry for the task while nonbelievers exhibited the expected right visual-field/left-hemisphere dominance documented in the literature. Believers' lack of asymmetry was not caused by an impaired left-hemisphere performance but rather by a significantly enhanced lexical-decision accuracy in the left visual field/right hemisphere compared to nonbelievers. These results are compatible with previous studies indicating a correlation between belief in ESP and a bias for right-hemisphere processing. Moreover, the results are relevant for a discussion of an association between paranormal beliefs and schizotypy: highly schizotypal individuals are not only particularly prone to believe in ESP but are also known to show an attenuation of hemispheric asymmetries in lateralized verbal tasks due to an enhanced contribution of the right hemisphere. We suggest that the neurological basis of delusion-like beliefs may involve a release of right-hemisphere function from left-hemisphere control and sketch the focus of research for a future "neuropsychology of belief."

'Meaningful' patterns in visual noise: effects of lateral stimulation and the observer's belief in ESP.
Brugger P Regard M Landis T Cook N Krebs D Niederberger J
Psychopathology (1993) 26(5-6):261-5

Visual noise subjectively contains more meaningful patterns (1) when tachistoscopically presented to the left visual field, and (2) for persons who believe in extrasensory perception (ESP). These results indicate a possible right hemisphere mediation of delusional perception and suggest some delusional component in the belief in ESP.

Childhood trauma and the origins of paranormal belief: a constructive replication
Irwin HJ
Psychol Rep (1994 Feb) 74(1):107-11

Previous research suggests that, as a group, people who believe in the paranormal tend to have a history of traumatic events in childhood. This relationship has been incorporated into Irwin's 1993 model of the psychological origins and functions of paranormal belief. A constructive replication of the relationship and a test of Irwin's model was undertaken in relation to a specific context, namely, a childhood spent with an alcoholic parent. Compared to 89 control participants, a sample of 32 adults who were children of alcoholics had stronger beliefs in witchcraft, superstitions, and precogntion. The results are discussed in relation to two components of Irwin's model.

Ritual Abuse

Clinical correlates of alleged satanic abuse and less controversial sexual molestation.
Leavitt F
Child Abuse Negl (1994 Apr) 18(4):387-92

Despite growing public interest and debate concerning satanic ritual abuse, few objective studies examine this controversial subject matter. To address this issue, measures of general psychopathology and dissociation were administered to patients alleging satanic ritual abuse and to patients alleging less controversial forms of sexual trauma. The subjects were women alleging a history of sexual abuse starting prior to the age of 12, involving penetration, and lasting for a period of at least 12 months. High but nondiscriminating levels of psychiatric pathology characterized both patient groups. Key differences were limited to dissociative symptomatology. Patients alleging satanic ritual abuse reported higher levels of dissociation, in the range often exhibited by patients with multiple personality disorders. The implications of the findings for SRA [satanic ritual abuse] credibility are addressed.

...Dissociation is a disorder rooted in the experience of severe trauma. One of the prime suspects in the development of dissociative disorders is severe sexual abuse, which is part of the history of all subjects in the sample. Participants were women who suffered childhood abuse for a period of 12 months or more prior to the age of 12. Despite this control, there were substantial differences between the two groups in terms of age of abuse onset and duration. The SRA group was abused earlier and for a much longer duration. Abuse in the SRA group started in infancy and lasted 4.5 years longer. It may well be that some configuration of sexual abuse in the infancy stage and extended abuse is the precursor for the development of dissociative svmptoms in the severity range of multiple personality disorders.

The results support the hypothesis that patients reporting SRA histories have higher levels of dissociative symptoms. The association between reports of SRA and unique pathology in the dissociative spectrum is striking and can not be dismissed lightly since both are low frequency events. However, this finding cannot be used to assess the authenticity of patients' SRA accounts. Alternative explanations exist that cannot be resolved by the available data. Very little is known about the impact of sexual abuse during infancy. It is possible that severe abuse makes memory more vulnerable to distortion and elaboration in the crucible of fantasy. Ganaway considers the past of patients with dissociative pathology to be unconsciously distorted as protection against anxiety-provoking memories of more prosaic forms of sexual abuse. According to this model, SRA patients genuinely believe what they allege, but what they allege is false.

...The results indicate that general psychopathology and dissociation are separable psychiatric phenomenon that simply do not rise and fall together. As such, they provide a framework for understanding the influences of sexual trauma on the development of differing forms of psychological dysfunction in adulthood.

Hallucinations

Clinical Evaluation of 14 Patients With the Charles Bonnet Syndrome (Isolated Visual Hallucinations)
Robert J. Teunisse, Frans G. Zitman, and Dick C.M. Raes
Comprehensive Psychiatry, 35(1), 1994: pp. 70-75

A group of 14 patients with isolated visual hallucinations who met the criteria proposed by Gold and Rabins for Charles Bonnet syndrome (with the exception of the criterion "hallucinations are stereotyped") underwent psychiatric, neurologic, and ophthalmologic tests. Additional common characteristics of the hallucinations included the absence of personal meaning of the content of the hallucinations and the disappearance of the hallucinations when the patients closed their eyes. There was no evidence for a relationship of the syndrome to psychiatric disorders. In the majority of cases, ocular pathology and neurologic disturbances were diagnosed. There was also evidence that most patients were suffering from social isolation. From these data it is concluded that a combination of factors is probably responsible for the Charles Bonnet syndrome.

Altered States of Consciousness

Occurrence of altered states of consciousness among students: Profoundly and superficially altered states in wakefulness.
Andrej Kokoszka,
Imagination, Cognition & Personality 1992-93 Vol 12(3) 231-247

Gathered data to estimate the occurrence of waking altered states of consciousness (ASC), formulated more precise descriptions of the most typical ASC, and collected information on frequency and circumstances of ASC occurrence. 171 university students completed the State of Mind and Consciousness Questionnaire, consisting of 17 main questions on ASC and additional questions on circumstances, frequency, and experiences related to ASC. 96% of Ss reported at least one experience defining a Superficial Altered State of Consciousness (SASC), while 75% of Ss had experienced a Profoundly Altered State of Consciousness (PASC). Comparison of the experiences accompanying ASC indicates that SASC are characterized by disturbances in experiencing reality and oneself combined with positive feelings. PASC are accompanied by experiences reated to absolute, universal, and religious matters.

Electromagnetic Fields and Consciousness

Sleepless in cellular land?
Medical Post July 5, 1994

Addicts of instant communication via cellular phones beware: their electronic emanations may be hazardous to your rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and affect central nervous system (CNS) functions.

Working under a grant from a giant German telephone company (Deutsche Bundepost Telekom), Dr. Klaus Mann, a psychiatrist at the University of Mainz, had 12 volunteers sleep with their heads 40 cm from the antenna of "a digital, mobile radio telephone" emitting a 900 megahertz electromagnetic field pulsed at 217 times per second.

Baseline sleep latency and REM sleep periods had been established in two previous nights in the Mainz sleep lab. Dr. Mann reported that under the influence of the nearby cellular telephone antenna his subjects' REM sleep component dipped from 17.07% of sleep time down to 13.91%.

He told the annual meeting here of the American Sleep Disorders Association/Sleep Research Society that their sleep onset latency (time duration to fall asleep) fell from an average 12.25 minutes to 9.5 minutes under the electromagnetic influence.

The subjects, however, didn't report any "side effects" from the exposure on the day following or subsequent days, and Dr. Mann has not tested any free-driving, frequently- talking subjects for nighttime sequelae to their daytime phone habits

Hypnosis

Relationships of Hypnotic Susceptibility to Paranormal Beliefs and Claimed Experiences: Implications for Hypnotic Absorption
Richard P. Atkinson
Amer J Clin Hypn 37:1, July 1994

This study examined the relationships of hypnotic susceptibility level to belief in and claimed experience with paranormal phenomena. The Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form A (HGSHS:A) and the Inventory of Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences were administered on consecutive days to 43 undergraduate students (14 men, 29 women) at a midwestern university. A significant multiple correlation was obtained ($r = .55, p < .001$). A partial correlation between hypnotic susceptibility and belief in paranormal phenomena was also significant ($r = .53, p < .001$), while hypnotic susceptibility was not found to be significantly related to claimed paranormal experiences. Implications of these relationships for the role of absorption in hypnosis are discussed.

An electrophysiological and psychophysical analysis of hypnotic visual hallucinations.
Arthur Perlini, Audrey Lorimer, Kenneth Campbell, Nicholas Spanos
Imagination, Cognition & Personality 1992-93 Vol 12(3) 301-312

Examined the physiological and behavioral concomitants of high hypnotizable Ss reporting the capacity to hypnotically hallucinate. 9 undergraduates volunteered for a study involving hypnosis and perception. Ss performed a lexical decision task under baseline and 4 hypnotic hallucination conditions: obstructive, transparent, negative, and semantic. Analyses were conducted on various evoked potential components and psychophysical indices. Hypnotic hallucinations did not alter visual evoked potentials (VEPs) over baseline, but further analyses indicated that the obstructive hallucination produced suppressions in the VEPs at the left occipital and midline parietal lobes. Left occipital latencies were also larger in the obstructive condition.

Fantasy

Paracosms and the development of fantasy in childhood
Stephen A. MacKeith,
Imagination, Cognition & Personality 1982-83 Vol 2(3) 261-267

Studied the development of fantasy in "normal" children. An uncommon sort of imagnative activity was selected for intensive study — "paracosm" (i.e., the spontaneous, but maintained and elaborated, ""private world"). Content and structure, rather than process, were emphasized in the study, which sought to delineate the development of various types of imaginary activity during 3 successive periods: 3-6 yrs, 7-12 yrs, and 13-18 yrs. For this, evidence was drawn from 3 sources: answers to a questionnaire by 53 adults who had been paracosmists in their childhoods, material on childhood fantasies in biographies and autobiographies, and a review of the psychological literature. 64 examples of paracosm were collected and were analyzed with reference, in each case, to the circumstances and personality of the S. It was found that in boys, naturalistic private worlds outnumbered fantastic private worlds by nearly 5 to 1. The year of peak frequency for the beginning of a paracosm was found to be between the ages of 8 and 9 yrs.

Persinger's Corner

Dream ESP Experiments and Geomagnetic Activity
Michael A. Persinger and Stanley Krippner
Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 83, April 1989, 101-116

The 24-hour periods in which the most accurate telepathic dreams occurred during the Maimonides studies displayed significantly quieter geomagnetic activity than the days before or after. This statistically significant V-shaped temporal sequence in geomagnetic activity was not evident for those periods when less accurate dreams occurred. When geomagnetic activity around the time of the strongest experimental telepathic dreams was compared to the geomagnetic activity around the time of spontaneous telepathic dreams from the Gurney, Myers, and Podmore (1886) collection, very similar (statistically indistinguishable) temporal patterns were observed. Analyses of both experimental and spontaneous telepathic experiences indicated that they were more accurate (or more likely to have occurred) during 24-hour intervals when the daily average antipodal (aa) index was approximately 10 ± 3 gammas. When the daily aa index exceeded amplitudes of approximately 20-25 gammas, telepathic experiences became less probable.